

CHAPTER III

EARLY

YEAS

1804-1821

On his marriage early in 1802, Isaac D'Israeli, who had been living in chambers in James Street, Adelphi, moved to 6, King's Road, Bedford Row¹, and there at half-past five in the morning of Friday, December 21, 1804, or according to the Jewish reckoning the 19th of Tebet, 5565, his eldest son Benjamin was born. On the eighth day the boy was duly initiated into the covenant of Abraham, the rite of circumcision being performed by a relative of his mother's, David Lindo. Benjamin was not the eldest child, for a daughter Sarah had preceded him on December 29, 1802; and three sons were to follow — Naphtali (who died in infancy) in 1807, Raphael (Ralph) in 1809, and Jacobus (James) in 1813.

The glimpses we are able to catch at this distance of time of the future statesman's childhood are few and of slight significance. 'My son Ben assures me you are in Brighton. He saw you ! Now, he never lies,' wrote Isaac D'Israeli from Brighton, where he was a frequent visitor, to his friend John Murray when the boy was

22, Theobald's Eoad. The house, though in what is now a noisy thoroughfare, has a pleasant outlook over Gray's Inn Garden, and is marked by a memorial tablet affixed by the London County Council. Oddly enough, Lord Beaconsfield seems never to have been certain either of the place of his birth or of the year in which it occurred.